



# A Home Education Framework

In the confusion that rules our world today, there are MANY educational approaches and ideas. How do we know which approaches and ideas to follow? All we can do is pray for God's help and guidance and move forward with confidence holding on to His hand each step of the way. What follows are suggestions that may or may not work for your child. Pray and ask God to help you to choose the ones that will help your son or daughter. This is NOT a comprehensive list – it is merely offered as a suggestion of materials/ideas to provide a skeleton framework to have on-hand to teach your child during troubled times.

## READING

**Teach Your Child to Read in 100 Easy Lessons**, by Siegfried Engelmann

**220 Basic Sight Words** (See attached list)

**Language Experience:** The Language Experience Approach to reading is where you simply ask your child to tell you a story as you write down what they tell you. It is often good to start by asking them to draw a picture and then tell you about it as you write down what they say. Use their (and your) imagination to guide how long or short the story is. As they mature in their writing skills, the student writes the story and reads it to the parent (or older sibling). Depending on what is written, use this as an opportunity for future lessons in English/Writing/ Reading Skills:

- Sentences begin with a capital and end with . ? !
- Proper names of people, pets, places begin with a capital.
- Phonics/Sight words, etc.

**Old Readers** – Embrace old readers. The values old readers teach far outweigh the out-of-date pictures. Old readers (pre-1980), show children interacting with their families and going to Mom and Dad with their questions and concerns. Many readers written in the 1980's and beyond show very little family life and children are seen going to their teachers for help and advice with no regard for their parents or families. An excellent set based on old readers is the Faith and Freedom Readers: Grades 1-8 Available individually or as a set from Seton Educational Media 866-241-8819 or online at [www.setonbooks.com](http://www.setonbooks.com) (Note: Basic Readers are important at younger levels, but not as important, in my opinion, at higher reading levels.)

## ENGLISH/WRITING SKILLS

**Daily Grams**, Easy Grammar Systems, by Wanda C. Phillips

**Warriner's English Grammar and Composition** (Out of print, will have to buy used)

## A Home Education Framework *(continued)*

**A Manual for Writers**, by Kate Turabian (Available at Seton Press)

**Andrew Pudewa:** Institute for Excellence in Writing

### **Paragraph/essay writing**

Suggested single paragraph format:

- Introductory sentence
- Middle sentences: Point One, Point Two, Point Three
- Ending Sentence

Suggested multi-paragraph format:

- Intro paragraph (use single paragraph format above, ending with thesis statement in place of summary sentence.)
- First middle paragraph: Restate point one listed in intro paragraph and expand on it.
- Second middle paragraph: Restate point two listed in intro paragraph and expand on it.
- Third middle paragraph: Restate point three listed in intro paragraph and expand on it.
- Final paragraph: Restate/summarize points given above, end with final thought.

### **MATH**

Basic Addition/Subtraction/Multiplication/Division Facts

Mastering Essential Math Skills (Level 1 – Elementary; Level 2 – Middle School & High School)

Math-U-See

Saxon Math

### **RELIGION**

All the Seton Religion Books are good, but if you had to choose only two books, Seton Religion 3 would provide a good framework for Grades 1-3 and Seton Religion 5 would work well for Grades 4-6.

New Catholic Picture Bible, by Rev. Lawrence G. Lovasik

St. Joseph Baltimore Catechism (No.1 – Elementary; No. 2 – Middle School; No. 3 High School. If you can only get one, get No. 2)

**Didache Series** (High School)



## A Home Education Framework *(continued)*

### SCIENCE

Apologia Exploring Creation series for Grades 3-6, 6-8, 9-12. (Available at Seton Ed. Media).

### SOCIAL STUDIES

Junior High/ High School: The American Story, The Beginnings, by David Barton & Tim Barton

### JUNIOR HIGH LITERATURE SUGGESTIONS

(Available at Seton Educational Media [www.setonbooks.com](http://www.setonbooks.com)):

Grade 7:

- The Singing Tree
- Men of Iron
- Johnny Tremain

Grade 8:

- Red Badge of Courage
- Old Man and the Sea
- A Christmas Carol

### HIGH SCHOOL LITERATURE SUGGESTIONS

(Available at Seton Educational Media):

**High School Grammar** by Seton Press

Suggested for Freshmen:

- The Lilies of the Field
- The Merchant of Venice
- Where the Red Fern Grows
- Red Badge of Courage
- Old Man and the Sea
- A Christmas Carol

Suggested for Sophomores:

- Animal Farm
- A Tale of Two Cities
- Scarlet Pimpernel

Suggested for Juniors:

- The Scarlet Letter
- Ballad of the White Horse
- The Bridge of San Luis Rey
- A Man For All Seasons
- The Screwtape Letters
- The Song of the Scaffold





# A Homeschooling Story: Andrea

## Unschooling and Leadership Education

There are several popular styles of home education, including Charlotte Mason, Classical, Eclectic, Montessori and Traditional ("school-at-home"). This post is an introduction to two styles of homeschooling, Unschooling and Leadership Education, and describes how our family has blended these two styles in our home education journey.

The age range of our five children is 22 to 10. We have homeschooled all our kids from the beginning -- all 22 years! If you are like me, you have thought about and researched and tried and failed and succeeded at many different attempts to find the perfect method of homeschooling. Or maybe you are just starting out in your homeschooling adventure. Well, I have discovered that a perfect method of homeschooling doesn't actually exist! But through our continuing home education experiment we have stumbled onto some things that help us meet our goal of raising lifelong learners.

When my husband and I decided to homeschool, back when we were engaged and preparing for marriage--our pastor insisted that we plan to homeschool our kids, after all--I started thinking about how that would look for us. As our first child grew and approached school age, my research focused on what method I liked best. I settled on the Charlotte Mason approach, and found a free online curriculum guide to help pursue the perfect home education. It looked lovely in theory, and works well for many families. Well, we tried to do ALL THE THINGS—poetry memorization, narration, flash cards, reading and writing practice, map work, music study, history, and so on. We continued this for a number of years, dropping off bits and pieces as it became obvious that with my personality, skills, and energy level—and a toddler--I could not manage so many details, so many subjects. Meanwhile said toddler grew older, and came with a vastly different personality and learning style. Everything we had done before was met with tears and frustration. Anything "schooly" ended in disaster. Workbooks were torture, my checklists to keep us on track were becoming emptier. Something had to change. Meanwhile, child #3 came along and taught herself to read, while #2 still struggled with the basics.

Even though my long-term memory isn't the greatest, the next part is still very clear: I was expecting twins! The months that followed stretched our family in so many new ways. I was 10 times as sick as ever before and sleeping 14+ hours a day for months. In the midst of many difficulties and some trips to the emergency room, any thought of regular, structured homeschooling pretty much flew out the window that year. But my oldest, at only 11 years old, became very adept at running the house from laundry to cooking to keeping track of her 2 siblings. Wow! What a practical education she gained that year! (And as a side note, she still wants to have a dozen kids and homeschool them all, so God was definitely working through that situation!) So that year, without knowing the name for it, we just fell into a kind of "radical unschooling" for sheer survival. That continued after the boys were born, as we were now caring for twin newborns, with double-the-everything!

## A Homeschooling Story: Andrea *(continued)*

Around this time, I happened upon something called the "Not-Back-To-School Summit", where I learned about unschooling and Leadership Education. These philosophies resonated with me. As I studied more about them, I found that they really go hand in hand.

Leadership Education, as described on <https://tjed.org/about-tjed-learning/>, is a philosophy of education that follows and supports the development of each individual child through distinct developmental/learning stages or "phases" towards the goal of helping each child gain the tailored education needed to match his or her God-given vocation. It is based on sound principles and a realization that "What" and "How" each child learns changes, based on the physical, emotional and intellectual development of the child, and these are not tightly bound to a precise age, though they do normally happen in a specific order. Here is a VERY brief description of the learning phases:

- The first phase is called Core. During this time the baby/child is learning right and wrong, attachment and love for parents and family, basic motor skills, a practical understanding of the way the world around him works, etc.
- The second phase is Love of Learning (aka LOL). In this phase, the child's mind is like a sponge, soaking up experiences and knowledge from all angles for the sheer joy of knowing and doing.
- In Transition phase, students show an increased interest and focus that is needed to pursue deeper learning. Often a mark of this stage is a sense of boredom or thirst for more to do, and correctly supported it develops naturally into scholar stage.
- Scholar students are serious about learning deeply and widely in many areas of knowledge. Scholar students are self-motivated, and can do much of their studies independently.

By now, you may be asking, "Where does unschooling fit into this developmental structure? And what is unschooling anyway?"

Unschooling is not so much a method as it is a mindset or home culture. To me it means allowing the child as much freedom in their own learning journey as the parents can stand, while providing the guidance, support, direct teaching, encouragement and materials they need along the way. Unschooling promotes self-directed and self-paced learning to whatever extent the parents decide is appropriate.

The unschooling outlook leads to learning that is accordingly tailored to each child. The parents must be tuned in to each of their children, to facilitate and make sure they each have what they currently need to advance their own learning goals. Maybe 4-year-old Alex really wants to be able to make his own lunch, or 10-year-old Suzie wants to improve her handwriting, or 12-year-old John wants to learn the math he needs to design a tiny house. As parent educators, we are the best able to see where they are, and help them plot a path to where they want to go. The means or method of the learning might include just living daily life, hands-on lessons side-by-side with you, a workbook that the child has agreed to use, a documentary series on the topic of study, discussions with a mentor or professional on a subject of interest, a textbook, and in-person or online class, and so on.



## A Homeschooling Story: Andrea *(continued)*

Parents also offer new ideas and experiences to expand their field of view. This can easily be done using a method called "strewing"; you simply leave interesting things like books or games or materials about in their view and reach, or you sit down and work with something yourself. Another way is to have discussions with your children about things that interest you personally.

In other words, in choosing an unschooling mindset we are not tied to and we don't rule out any particular method or curriculum choice. We just try our best to provide whatever will achieve the learning outcome the child seeks. The methods, experiences and materials we provide will be tailored to their current phase of development (Core, LOL, Transition, Scholar), so a Core or LOL student's education will more often look very unschooly, whereas a Transition or Scholar student often chooses a more rigorous, classical- or university-style method because of the breadth and depth they desire in their learning.

Back to our story... After our family's initial start with homeschooling as "school at home", we fell into radical unschooling, then gradually, starting with a focus on the oldest child and working down the line, began implementing the ideas of Leadership Education and unschooling in our family.

I have seen the same thing happen with the two girls: there is a feeling of boredom at around age 12 or 13, showing readiness to transition to a more structured and rigorous educational style. We then begin—or more accurately continue, but increase—feeding them good books of all sorts (fiction, non-fiction, textbooks), in-person and online classes in subjects of interest, and a few of their most-desired extra-curricular activities. One thing that really sparked learning was an online discussion and mentoring program using classics and great books in all genres from literature, government, history, poetry, math, science, etc. Interaction and discussions about great literature with peers and trusted mentors are keys that unlock truly significant learning in the highschool years.

Not all students should pursue higher education. Indeed, I don't recommend it at all unless the student is truly ready and has a well-defined reason to go, such as plans for a career or vocation that requires a college degree.

For a high-school age student who plans to go to college, the parent's guidance includes helping them ensure their studies will be sufficient for the entrance requirements. Our oldest is now a junior at a rigorous Catholic liberal arts college, and she said her home education prepared her well. She also went to community college and worked for a year before deciding that college was the right choice for her.

For a student whose interests tend toward vocational and/or service-type jobs, as does our oldest son, the focus of the education is on practical life skills and general knowledge. Of course, learning and living the faith and cultivating virtue are part of everyone's education as well.



## A Homeschooling Story: Andrea *(continued)*

For our youngest two children, the twins, we see the benefits of having some structure in our regular day, but they are both still in LOL phase, so we keep the "required" subjects to a minimum. They are accustomed to doing "practice time", during which we work one-on-one with them on reading, writing, and catechism. Read-alouds and audiobooks are steady fare. The rest of their day is mostly their own, but they (and the other kids as well) have their home-work (chores) to do. We often add in some fun learning activities in various subjects, like Mystery Science online, and we have lots of games and hands-on materials they can use. Practical skills training comes naturally in a household where we cook from scratch, grow food in a garden, build and make lots of crafts, work on cars, bikes and motorized equipment, etc. We collect used sporting equipment for many kinds of outdoor activities, and encourage all the kids to get outside every day.

Like many families, our family life is just about full with everyday activities. As we see the need or opportunity and it fits with our desired level of busyness, we add in co-ops, field trips, groups/clubs (American Heritage Girls and TrailLife USA are among our favorites), outside lessons/classes like crossfit, music and theater, and occasionally sports. We unschool year-round, taking it a little lighter in the summer, with two main benefits: the children don't slide backward over the summer in terms of learning or the daily habit of studying; and our family has more time-freedom for vacations and breaks throughout the year.

One common question about unschooling is, "What do you do if you believe there is some minimum set of required subjects that your child needs to do?" Many parents who unschool fall into this category. Let's take the example of math. Everyone wants their children to learn math, right? However, there are lots of very different ways to approach the actual learning involved. For example, a younger child will be learning math in real life—telling time, earning/saving/spending money, cooking, weighing/measuring with various tools, playing a variety of games, building with LEGO or K'NEX, and through discussion and activities with parents and older siblings. Actually, there is no need for anything more formal than this for several years into what we call "school age". Studies (don't miss these articles: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/freedom-learn/201003/when-less-is-more-the-case-teaching-less-math-in-school>, <https://nickitruedell.com/delaying-math-instruction-might-be-a-good-thing/>) – and lots of actual experience from homeschooling families--show that several years of elementary math can be easily learned in a matter of months when the child is interested and developmentally ready.

So, my question would be, "Why waste a child's time, trying to force developmentally-inappropriate learning, if with some delay it can be done more efficiently when the child is ready and willing?"

On the other hand, an older child may not see the need for a particular subject until they come upon the consequences of that deficiency in their own life. These consequences can "do the talking" quite effectively, but we can also help the student understand the practical uses of



## A Homeschooling Story: Andrea *(continued)*

various kinds of knowledge through discussion. True learning cannot really be forced; it has to be a conscious choice of the student. However, the motivation for learning can be positive (self-direction) or negative (coercion).

The idea behind unschooling is to allow, as much as the parents are comfortable with, for the motivation behind learning to be natural and positive. So, it really takes a change in mindset. Here are some questions that could lead to improved outcomes:

- “Why do I require this subject right now?”
- “Is this child already learning through life experiences what he truly needs at this stage in his development?”
- “If the way we are approaching the learning objective is not working for this child, what other ways could I provide that would work better?”
- “Is the child developmentally ready to learn this, or should we just take a break from this for a while?”

Being honest and looking for better solutions is advised, rather than trying to stay the course when a child is really struggling.

Especially with younger children, try to keep them in the zone where they are excited and just a little challenged with what they are learning. It is so amazing to be able to see your children excited and proud at gaining new skills and knowledge, especially when they have chosen it for themselves! Older students, when given the opportunity to take the responsibility for their studies mostly on their own shoulders, will increasingly push themselves as they strive to learn more widely and deeply!

Though our journey has been very rocky at times, we have learned so much through the struggles and successes. We look forward to the path ahead, trusting that God will “fill the gaps” as we do our best to teach and learn according to each child’s needs, interests and God-given gifts.

Here are some resources with more information about Unschooling and Leadership Education, and some of the other things I mentioned above:

- **TJEd.org** - Leadership Education videos, books, blog; "TJEd High" is the online high-school mentoring program
- Books by unschooling pioneers John Holt (especially <https://archive.org/details/HowChildrenLearn/>) and John Taylor Gatto
- John Holt's website: <https://www.johnholtgws.com/>
- John Taylor Gatto's website: <https://www.johntaylorgatto.com/>
- <https://nickitruedell.com/it-does-not-take-twelve-years-to-educate-a-child/>
- **librivox.org** for audiobooks





## A Homeschooling Story: Andrea *(continued)*

- <https://groups.io/g/unschoolingcatholics> - discussion forum about unschooling for Catholics
- Life of Fred - full, developmentally-appropriate Math curriculum through college level; elementary
- English curriculum
- Dave Ramsey - personal finance curriculum
- Adolescent Launching Checklist –  
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/182c7hmB21zUZdx6D08u149iSUXztYvdi/view>





## A Homeschooling Story: Mick

I first started considering homeschooling when my oldest child was a newborn. I don't remember exactly how the idea came to me; but at the time, my husband was working in Washington DC, and we were not far from the headquarters of Seton Home Study School. I remember getting a copy of *Catholic Homeschooling: A Handbook for Parents*, by Dr. Mary Kay Clark (the founder of Seton Home Study School); and after reading it, I thought, "I can do this." I come from a family of teachers: my father taught junior high and high school, my mother taught at the local community college, and my older brother taught at my high school (I actually had him as my history teacher during my junior year). I had double-majored in Mathematics and Education in college; and although I had trained to teach grades 7 through 12, I thought, "How much different could it be to teach kindergarten and the primary grades?"

By the time our oldest child was four, we had moved to Los Angeles County, California. I was already concerned about his education: There was no way I was going to send him to the local public schools, but the annual tuition for kindergarten at our parish school was \$8,000. Our family was on an extremely tight budget, so the parish school was out. Thus, when it was time for our son to start kindergarten, we took the homeschooling plunge.

As Providence would have it, one of my close friends in California had been homeschooled through high school; and her parents were the local representatives for Seton Home Study School. Although I had been planning to use a different Catholic curriculum, my friend's parents convinced me to try Seton. It turned out to be a good fit: I liked their textbooks and workbooks, and I loved the "hand-holding" provided by the daily lesson plans and the access that I had to the teachers and counselors who worked at Seton. I knew that if I had any questions, they had answers; and that if I ran into difficulties, they could help me solve them.

By the time our second child was ready for kindergarten, we were living in an extremely rural area in the Midwest. My husband and I were not impressed with the local public schools; and the Catholic schools, while affordable, were farther away than we wanted to drive twice daily. We knew no one who sent their children to the Catholic schools, so carpooling was not an option. We therefore continued homeschooling our oldest and began homeschooling our second.

When our third child was a toddler, my mother became gravely ill. Our oldest was in sixth grade, the middle child was in third, and the youngest was in kindergarten. Homeschooling allowed us the flexibility to pack up our schoolbooks and travel the seven hours to be with my parents during that difficult time. Over a twelve-month period, the children and I made that trip fourteen times.

## A Homeschooling Story: Mick *(continued)*

We never knew if we would be staying at my parents' for a weekend or for a fortnight. Most of the time we did school at the house, but on several occasions we did school in a hospital waiting room. Homeschooling was such a blessing; had my children been enrolled in a brick-and-mortar school, we would not have been able to travel as often, and my children would most likely have gotten behind in their schoolwork. Instead, through it all they were able to stay caught up in their studies while I tended to my duties toward my parents.

Seton's curriculum worked well for my children for fifteen years, but at that point I decided to design my own curriculum. After so many years of teaching kindergarten through high school, I had seen how different all of my children were with regard to their learning styles; their particular interests, both academic and non-academic; and their "educational temperaments," if you will. So I designed curricula that were really tailored to the strengths and weaknesses of each child. I still use many of the books that my older children used when enrolled in Seton, but I sometimes choose other books--particularly in the areas of mathematics, science, and literature--which are a better "fit" for a particular child.

If I could give one piece of encouragement to a parent that is considering embarking on the homeschooling journey, it would be this: You can do this. In fact, you already are doing this; you have been your child's teacher since the day he was born. The most important lessons in life he will learn from you. So, rolling academics into the other important education that you are imparting to him is simply an extension of what you've been doing anyway. You don't have to have a degree in Education or any particular credentials to successfully educate your children all the way through high school. I still remember the humorous yet apt advice that a friend gave me at the beginning of my own homeschooling journey: "Don't worry about 'messaging up' your kids; if they graduate from high school able to balance a checkbook and put sentences together in comprehensible fashion, they'll be ahead of 90% of the students in the public schools." And, I would add, they will know their faith; and that is the most important thing of all.





# Catholic Homeschool Mentor Outline

This mentor outline is meant to be used when meeting with a prospective homeschooling family for the first time. The outline is laid out to walk the family through the basics of getting a home school started that fits their family style or in paraphrasing the words of St. John Paul II, "Be the family you are meant to be."

The first step is to know the goal of homeschooling for that family. The second step is to help the family to find their educational style. It is important to remember that not all families are alike, and that your style may not be their style--that is alright. If you as the mentor struggle with doing things a certain way, remember the above, each family has to be the family God wants them to be, not the way we want them.

In the second step, the five most common styles of homeschooling are listed with a short explanation, where to access more information on that particular style, and curriculum that fits that style of education. For families that do not know their style of education, it is recommended to check out the websites and order catalogs from the curriculum providers. The catalogs are great resources that can be marked up with notes.

If a family has a high school student, then the third step is to discuss high school. This is a time of transitioning into adulthood, so the mentor will assist the family in laying out the responsibilities of the student and then creating a plan. Since the plan for high school education can go any direction and this is a time of transition, it is important for a student to narrow what their interests are. From there, help the student identify his career/vocational goals. Once that is established, then the final step is deciding on the subjects (classes) to be studied.

## GOAL - WHAT IS THE GOAL

Each family writes their own goal statement. Ex. "Our goal is raising faithful Catholics that are disciplined and self-motivated, can analytically think through what they read or situations presented to them, and most importantly, learn to serve God with all their heart, soul, and mind no matter their vocation."

## WHAT IS THE FAMILY'S EDUCATION STYLE?

**Charlotte Mason** – Belief that the child is a person that must be educated as a whole, not just his mind. "Education is an Atmosphere, a Discipline, a Life."

- Information
  - Atmosphere – child absorbs from his environment
  - Discipline – cultivating good habits and discipline
  - Life – give living thoughts and ideas not just dry facts

## Catholic Homeschool Mentor Outline *(continued)*

- More Information
  - <https://simplycharlottemason.com/what-is-the-charlotte-mason-method/>
- Curriculum Options
  - Salt & Light - <https://sacredbythesea.blogspot.com/p/catholic-lamp-lightcurriculum.html>
  - Mater Amabilis - <http://materamabilis.org/ma/>

### **Classical** - Based on Grammar, Logic & Rhetoric

- Information
  - Grammar – Learning facts, memorization, & knowledge gathering
  - Logic – reasoning & logic applied to facts, memorization, and knowledge
  - Rhetoric – learn skills of wisdom & judgement
- More Information
  - <https://www.thehomeschoolmom.com/homeschooling-styles/classicalhomeschooling/>
- Curriculum Options
  - Aquinas Learning - <https://www.aquinaslearning.com/>
  - Kolbe Academy - <https://www.kolbe.org/>
  - Mother of Divine Grace - <https://modg.org/>
  - Angelicum Academy - <https://www.angelicum.net/>
  - Queen of Heaven Academy - <https://queenofheavenacademy.org/>
  - Catholic Schoolhouse - <https://www.catholicschoolhouse.com/catholichomeschool-ad-page/>
  - Classically Catholic Memory - <https://www.classicallycatholicmemory.com/>
  - Rolling Acres/Schola Rosa - <https://www.oxrosepress.com/>
  - Bellarmine Studies - <https://bellarminestudies.com/>
  - Tan Academy - <https://tanacademy.com/materials-by-grade>

### **Eclectic** – Combo of Styles

- Information
  - Individualized education method resulting from mixing and matching a variety of homeschooling resources
- More Information
  - <https://www.time4learning.com/homeschooling-styles/eclectichomeschool.html>
- Curriculum Options
  - Homeschool Connections - <https://homeschoolconnections.com>

### **Montessori** - Based on children learn by doing, child-led learning

- More information
  - <http://www.montessori.edu/homeschooling.html>
  - <https://www.catholicmontessorihome.com/>



## Catholic Homeschool Mentor Outline *(continued)*

**Traditional** – using similar methods to those used in public or private schools

- Curriculum
  - Catholic Heritage Curricula - <https://www.chcweb.com/catalog/index.php>
  - Our Lady of the Rosary School - <https://olrs.com/>
  - Seton Home Study - <https://www.setonhome.org/>
  - Our Lady of Victory - <https://www.olvs.org/>

### Highschool

- Student Responsibilities
  - Important that each student has a say in his/her education.
  - Emphasis that homeschooling high school is a lot of independent study and the student needs to be responsible and take initiative.

- **Lay Out Plan**

What does student want to do? (This can and usually will change over time.)

- Career Choice/Vocation
- Interests
- Hobbies

#### Job/School Choice

- Straight to a Job
- Tech/Trade School
- 4-year College or Beyond, Vocation to Priesthood or Religious Life, Career
- Research Job/Career Requirements
- Research the requirements of school and state.

#### Decide on Classes

- Mathematics
- English/Language Arts
- Religion
- Social Studies
- Science
- Electives - Art, Music and other electives with endless possibilities!

Resources - Highschool of your dreams:

[https://www.chcweb.com/catalog/ByGradeLevel/HighSchool/HighSchoolofYourDreamsGuidebook/product\\_info.html](https://www.chcweb.com/catalog/ByGradeLevel/HighSchool/HighSchoolofYourDreamsGuidebook/product_info.html)





# Essentials For Off-Grid Learning

This is a list of the most basic/fundamental homeschooling needs with guidance for when things go down. i.e. “How can you do school with what you have in your home?” These are some of the essential supplies, tools and resources you could have on hand for teaching and learning without the internet.

Think about what will really be important for children to learn in a scenario such as this. The “three R’s” of “Reading, wRiting and aRithmetic” will always be essential, as well as a fourth “R”–Religion. But also consider whether there are other things which might become more or less important.

When collecting your resources, start with the level(s) your children are at now; but don’t forget that they will grow and you will need higher levels of material for future teaching, too. Get to know other homeschooling families near you, so that you can share educational resources when needed. Most importantly, just start collecting good books. Build a library in your own home; and if you need to, join with a few other nearby families to collect the books you plan to use in the next few years.

Remember that neighbors, fellow parishioners, and relatives have skills that could benefit your children by learning from them, as well as fomenting those important relationships that build community.

## GENERAL SUPPLIES

- Paper (lined, unlined, 3-hole punched, sketching, art, construction, etc.)
- 1st Grade and 3rd Grade paper for learning printing and then penmanship
- Pencils, pens, pencil sharpeners
- Highlighters
- Whiteboard (magnetic ones are handy), window markers, dry erase markers and erasers
- Chalkboard, chalk and erasers
- Big rolls of paper
- Watercolor paints, tempera paints, paintbrushes, thicker paper
- Scissors, markers
- Tape, glue, sticky tack
- Post-It notes are great for bookmarks
- Notecards
- Paper cutter
- Folders, notebooks, page protectors, binders
- Crayons, especially for grades K thru 3rd
- Rulers (transparent ones are nice), yard stick
- Glue gun and glue gun sticks
- Page protectors, copy paper, tab dividers (the ones you can write on and reuse are great!), and binders of different sizes, zippered binders are handy, if you’d like to have a curriculum binder for each child.

## Essentials For Off-Grid Learning *(continued)*

- Foam core board is excellent for making reusable boards for various subjects (get them at a dollar store)
- Sharpies in different ink widths: fine point, wide point etc. are very useful
- Fun stickers for motivation on work done well, especially for K thru 3 grades
- Plastic crates, banker boxes, and/or bookshelves to organize and store different subjects, grade levels, school supplies, etc.
- Seasonal decorations. Decorate your area, (dining room, study room) to anticipate the beautiful seasons and holidays we celebrate. Kids love this and can contribute! (boxes to store seasonal decorations, LOL)
- Scented candles in seasonal scents. When the days are dark and dreary it's lovely to light these

### LANGUAGE ARTS AND LITERATURE

- Phonics flashcards or games
- A phonics program (e.g. All About Learning, Abeka's A Handbook for Reading, or CHC's Little Stories for Little Folks)
- Sand or rice on a tray, for a little one to "write" in with a finger or object; teaches them the motions without committing them to paper
- All About Learning has alphabet and phoneme letters with magnets that are helpful for young kids, those with reading difficulties, and when teaching spelling rules.
- Penmanship book or sample pages: e.g. Getty-Dubay Italic desk strips, Handwriting Without Tears (for students who hate writing or are perfectionists), or Callirobics (also for those who don't enjoy penmanship)
- A grammar handbook for older students, e.g. Elements of Style or Easy Grammar Plus
- Children's poetry, such as Robert Louis Stevenson, Christine Rossetti
- Classics (and newer books that are worthwhile) from all genres and for all reading levels
- The Holy Bible, Douay-Rheims translation
- Books of poetry such as America's Best-Loved Poems
- Hooked on Phonics, especially older versions that use cassette tapes (need a fisher price cassette player)
- The Latin Road to English Grammar Volumes One, Two and Three: an excellent way to teach your kids both a foreign language and English grammar. I can't say enough good about this resource designed for a Mom to do with kids, not hard, just must put in consistent time:  
**<https://www.thelatinroad.com/latin-road-volume1/>**
- Narnia Series (also on audio books)
- Lord of the Rings, Hobbit, (also on audio books)
- Screwtape Letters (also on audio books)
- Laura Ingalls Wilder Little House series (Little House in the Great Woods, etc, also on audio, delightful for children)
- Catholic National Reader (Primer for K) Series is lovely, very old, for both reading, reading comprehension questions and spelling word lists for grade school. Also it is a great peek into the 18th and 19th century culture, solid morality, etc. (Kolbe has these)





## Essentials For Off-Grid Learning *(continued)*

### MATH

- Measuring tools: for example, set of measuring cups and spoons, rulers, tape measure, measuring tape (sewing), some kind of scale, protractor, compass (these are also useful for science)
- Blocks, such as unifix cubes (You can't have enough blocks! Wooden blocks, the big cardboard fake brick ones, legos, etc. Kids of all ages will play with these endlessly, useful in many subjects and imaginative play!!!)
- Calculator, batteries (or a solar calculator)
- Dominoes for counting/math games
- Flashcards or materials to make your own
- Play money
- Graph paper, different sizes
- Analog clock
- Playing cards, other card games (Uno, Set, etc.), logic games (e.g. Mastermind, chess)
- Math book appropriate for each child's level (and above, if you can; or share with other families)
- Those wooden bead roller coasters toys make great abacuses for when kids have to do basic addition and subtraction problems. It's a fun way to add and subtract when learning math facts
- Clock toy to teach time.

### SCIENCE

- A book on chemistry in the kitchen
- Plant, tree, animal, insect and mushroom ID guides for your area
- Anatomy, Astronomy, Biology, Chemistry, Physics books for the ages of your children
- A book on how to conduct experiments and for the olders, how to write up a lab with question, hypothesis, methods, data, analysis and conclusion
- Find some good biographies of scientists, especially those with details about their faith as well as their discoveries and inventions
- Garden seeds and tools
- Engineering books with project ideas that could be done around the house or property
- Harcourt Science books (frog, parrot, lion for grade school science)

### GEOGRAPHY/MAP SKILLS

- Atlas
- Globe
- Wall maps, road maps
- Compass



## Essentials For Off-Grid Learning *(continued)*

### HISTORY AND CIVICS

- Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States  
Print out: The 1776 Report.
- A set of history books covering the standard historical periods: Ancient Greece and Rome,
- Rise of Christianity, Medieval Europe, Modern Times
- The Federalist Papers

### RELIGION

- The Holy Bible, multiple copies (one for each member of the family, if possible)
- Baltimore catechism in various levels
- Holy cards and old Christmas cards to use for making prayer books and other projects
- Lined paper with blank space for pictures on top for copying/illustrating Bible stories, prayers, etc.
- Children's illustrated Bible or other age-appropriate Bible and books of Bible stories, saints, and prayers, such as the St Joseph picture book series, Catholic Children's Treasure Box series
- Blessed votive candles for prayer time
- Lives of the Saints
- Blessed and exorcized Holy Water
- Blessed and exorcized salt
- I really liked "Faith and Life Series" Kolbe uses
- Catechism of The Catholic Church
- Rosaries
- Scapulars
- Catholic Coloring books (Seton has these)
- Music (Gregorian chants, kid's bible songs, etc)  
<https://setonbooks.com/music/172-hug-me-jesus-cd.html> and
- PARIS,TWILA - Bedtime Prayers: Lullabies & Peaceful Worship - Amazon.com Music

### REFERENCE BOOKS

- Old set of encyclopedias
- Dictionary, thesaurus
- Curriculum planning books, such as
  - Designing Your Own Classical Curriculum (Berquist)
  - The Well-Educated Mind (Bauer)
  - What Your \_\_\_ Grader Should Know (Hirsch)
  - The Lost Tools of Learning (Sayer)
  - Ignatian Education in the Home (Kolbe Academy)
  - Better Late than Early, Raymond S Moore and Dorothy N. Moore
- Homesteading books: gardening, animal-keeping, food preservation, woodworking, sewing, crocheting/knitting, building structures, etc.
- Elementary Diagramming Worktext, by Mary Daly, revised 2006 is excellent for explaining English grammar/diagramming sentences
- Socratic Logic by Peter Kreeft



## Essentials For Off-Grid Learning *(continued)*

### ONE-STOP SHOPPING FOR BOOKS

- Seton Home Study School has an excellent bookstore that lists books by grade level:  
**<https://setonbooks.com/>**
- Compare prices for used books at [thriftbooks.com](http://thriftbooks.com), [alibris.com](http://alibris.com), [homeschoolclassifieds.com](http://homeschoolclassifieds.com), [abebooks.com](http://abebooks.com), and Amazon
- Kolbe Academy Homeschool also has a bookstore listed by grade level. They offer books for a classical education:  
**[https://books.kolbe.org/collections/all?\\_pf&pf\\_t\\_course\\_format=Homeschool](https://books.kolbe.org/collections/all?_pf&pf_t_course_format=Homeschool)**

### MISCELLANEOUS

- Sewing machine As beginners we all love this one by Brother:  
Amazon.com: Brother HC1850 Sewing and Quilting Machine, 185 Built-in Stitches, LCD Display, 8 Included Feet
- Ukuleles can be affordable, easier to learn for music
- A guitar plus a few sets of extra strings, and a basic how-to-play book
- Knitting and/or crochet needles and yarn (and instruction books and pattern books, as mentioned above)
- Dress up costumes for boys and girls. This is one of the nicest I've found:  
<https://www.littledressupshop.com/little-dress-up-shop-advantage.html>
- Ed Emberley's drawing books are fun (these make great Christmas presents):  
**<https://www.thriftbooks.com/series/ed-emberley-drawing-books/39852/>**
- Art curriculum: Artistic Pursuits also makes great Christmas presents, as you need supplies in a bag to go with book): **<https://artisticpursuits.com>**





# Foundational Knowledge for Rebuilding Society

A conversation from CORAC General Discussion Signal group

**[P]** Fyi about an earlier article last year: Vivek Ramaswamy: 'Likely Won't Sign a Federal Abortion Ban' <https://www.dailysignal.com/2023/07/27/vivek-ramaswamy-unapologetically-pro-life-but-likely-wont-sign-a-federal-abortion-ban/>

**[N]** I'd like to offer a comment and a couple questions -

Some people desire more freedom for us to make choices rather than make the rule of law our conscience. I don't know the best way to do that. I don't want to make prostitution a legalized activity and therefore taxable, but I don't want to turn into the Puritans with public shaming either (I know those are extreme examples.)

I agree, abortion is murder. And I think Christians were shortsighted about overturning Roe. I could kick myself that I never thought strategically where the battle would jump once it occurred. It's so obvious in hindsight that it would move back to the states.

One of my concerns as we move into the future is that we may go too hard on legislating morality without changing lives and hearts. We need our society to return to God. We need a moral people, but where do we draw the line to balance this is a huge consideration. One of my concerns is - Are we educated enough to make good choices in rebuilding? I believe Charlie mentioned in his last blogs that this is a very real issue when going forward and that we need to get it right.

Do we really want the federal government in charge of and making all of our laws? How do we live holy but simply?

**[A]** If I remember correctly, Aristotle asserted that a state (i.e. political entity w/ people and their government), to be and remain properly ordered, cannot be excessively large. Authentic Catholic social teaching covers this under the idea of subsidiarity: governing decisions should be made at the most local level possible. We have a federal government usurping states' rights, etc. But IDK how that plays into these moral issues. We have a big task ahead to reeducate the people towards moral order.

**[S]** Yes. Aristotle definitely believed that geographic distance, economic capabilities, and ethnic/cultural matters made it possible for everyone to "know" everyone else within a Res Publica, based on 1-2 connections. I think he limited it to city-states of 150,000, but I believe modern tech makes room for more than that. IMHO, the smaller colony states are about the right size by geography. I highly recommend the book "Catholic Republic" by Tim Gordon. Aquinas lists Res Publicas as one of the three forms of legitimate government in the eyes of the Church.

## Foundational Knowledge for Rebuilding Society *(continued)*

In "Catholic Republic" there are 6 concepts found in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution which are neither found in Protestantism nor Enlightenment thinking, but are only found in Catholic thinkers like Bellarmine, Suarez, and Aquinas. The author presents evidence that some of the Founding Fathers were secretly reading the writings of papists!

**[A]** Ok, S and N. Sounds like we could start with ourselves and within CORAC. Speaking for myself, educated in a standard public school, I did not receive any of this knowledge as part of my education. WE need to really learn this too! I have read Tim Gordon's book, and that was my first clue to the scope of the problem and the potential solution.

So...the book list...start with Catholic Republic by Timothy Gordon. What else is foundational?

**[P]** FYI on the Catholic Republic Book overview:

"Some Christians decry the deism of our Founding Fathers, claiming that outright anti-Christian principles lie at the heart of our Declaration of Independence and Constitution, crippling from birth our beloved republic.

Here philosopher Timothy Gordon forcefully disagrees, arguing that while anti-Catholic bias kept them from admitting their reliance on Aristotle, Aquinas, and the early Jesuits, our Protestant and Enlightenment Founding Fathers secretly held Catholic views about politics and nature.

Had they fully adhered to Catholic principles, argues Gordon, the "Catholic republic" that is America from its birth would not today be on the verge of social collapse. The instinctive Catholicism of our Founders would have prevented the cancerous growth of the state, our subsequent loss of liberties, the destruction of families, abortion on demand, the death of free markets, and the horrors of today's pervasive pagan culture.

In Catholic Republic, Gordon recounts our nation's clandestine history of publicly repudiating, yet privately relying on, Catholic ideas about politics and nature. At this late hour in the life of the Church and the world, America still can be saved, claims Gordon, if only we soon return to the Catholic principles that are the indispensable foundation of all successful republics."

**[J]** The Forerunners of the Reformation - with Dr Scott Hahn <https://youtu.be/CTMX4C169bg>  
This is a particularly enlightening talk!

**[N]** I am not an expert at this. I have been concerned about my own ignorance.

You mentioned subsidiarity - what's the best place to learn more about this foundation? The catechism or a papal document?



## Foundational Knowledge for Rebuilding Society *(continued)*

I also need to pull out Tim Gordon's book again. It's very educational. But I needed help to read it. I am a convert as well as a product of a public school and a college that didn't highlight philosophy, so I don't know Aristotle nor much of Aquinas.

Think of me as your sample pupil 😊

[M] Sign me up for that one too.

[J] Ok, also, me!

[E] Me too (or me 4) 😊

[J] Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church:

[https://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/pontifical\\_councils/justpeace/documents/rc\\_pc\\_justpeace\\_doc\\_20060526\\_compendio-dott-soc\\_en.html](https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/justpeace/documents/rc_pc_justpeace_doc_20060526_compendio-dott-soc_en.html)

[A] Hey, S! Would you, could you lead us in a study group?

[S] Would love to if I had the attention bandwidth. Rather, I suggest in addition to the book for people to take the online course from the author himself at:

<https://www.timothyjgordon.com/product-page/pre-recorded-catholic-republic-class?sh1103>

[A] Ok. We have a good set of starting points. Thanks, J for the link to the Church document.

[M] Book sounds interesting, and I am definitely going to look into it. I am hoping maybe it is available on Audible, so I can listen as I work on my NRS. Also, the link to Scott Hahn I am definitely going to listen to. I personally do not worry about being "educated enough". I keep my eyes and ears open and tuned in. I read and learn as much as I can, where I feel called to. I do not worry about trying to learn about every topic in depth. I am not called to be a "Scott Hahn or Tim Gordon". I am called to be a pupil of them, and I do not worry about getting an "A" on any test. We all have different gifts and talents. I do not think I am going to be called to write or draw up any foundational materials on political matters, but may be called to share survival and homesteading skills. I will happily grow your food, harvest it, process it, and bake or cook your meals from the fruits of my labor, while I pray for my brother or sister to be divinely inspired to write the appropriate documents that will be needed at the appropriate time. That is the beauty of community. I want to surround myself and make these connections now to lighten all of our burdens in times to come. Using the potluck analogy CJ used years ago, we each come to the potluck with different dishes, and together we have a bountiful feast!

[S] Tim's writing style uses a bit of legalese, and I think his books could use some 2nd editions for easier reading, but the content is all there.



## Foundational Knowledge for Rebuilding Society *(continued)*

[P] <https://thehill.com/elections/4408071-almost-half-of-haley-supporters-say-they-would-vote-for-biden-over-trump-iowa-poll/>

[A] And this is why free citizens need a basic education in philosophy according to Aristotle.

[J] Charlie frequently quotes John Adams: "Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other."

### TOPICS

- Basic Education in Politics and Philosophy
- Local Governance
- Subsidiarity
- Social Teachings of the Catholic Church
- Constitution
- Aristotle, Aquinas, Bellarmine

### RESOURCES

- "The Forerunners of the Reformation" by Dr. Scott Hahn  
<https://youtu.be/CTMX4C169bg>
- Book and online course: "Catholic Republic" by Timothy J. Gordon  
<https://sophiainstitute.com/product/catholic-republic/>  
<https://www.timothyjgordon.com/product-page/pre-recorded-catholic-republic-class?sh1103>
- Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church  
[https://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/pontifical\\_councils/justpeace/documents/rc\\_pc\\_justpeace\\_doc\\_20060526\\_compendio-dott-soc\\_en.html](https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/justpeace/documents/rc_pc_justpeace_doc_20060526_compendio-dott-soc_en.html)





# Help For Reading Difficulties

By Carolyn Goldammer, Certified Dyslexia Specialist/Teacher

As a part of the CoRaC National Education Team, I will attempt to put together a way to help your child when you have tried to teach them to read and spell and they just don't seem to be catching on. Sometimes it is because they have a language-based learning disability, such as dyslexia. All of the methods I use when teaching students with learning disabilities are the same as I would use for children who seem to catch on more quickly. The difference is the amount of repetition needed in order to build foundational reading skills. According to one study "A Principal's Primer for Raising Reading Achievement", p. 66, the number of times you repeat/practice a skill can range from 1-4 repetitions for a "gifted reader" to 200 or more repetitions (with correct responses) for a child with a language-based learning issue, in order to solidify the neural pathways to make reading automatic.

There are numerous materials that can be utilized to practice reading and spelling skills, remembering that they need to be systematic and multi-sensory, especially when a child struggles or is young. Our lessons should build in this repetition to link proper speech sounds to their letter representation while teaching correct letter formation, decoding skills (reading) and encoding skills (spelling). Some of the ways to accomplish this are using:

- Letter tiles\* (I like to put magnets on the back)
- Phonogram cards\*
- Reading words, phrases, and sentences using the new skill then transitioning to very decodable stories\* based on your scope and sequence.
- Clay that can be shaped into letters & sounds
- Sand trays (I have found an 11x13" metal baking dish with a bumpy bottom and filled with a thin layer of sand)
- Shaving cream

The list is as big as your creativity.

\* I love using the program All About Reading (AAR) and All About Spelling, which were written with homeschoolers in mind. One of the mistakes I see for new homeschoolers is understanding that "Lesson One" does not mean teach in one day. This needs to be practiced many times to build in automaticity. My students love to read from AAR "real books" with beautifully illustrated pictures. This program provides teachers' manuals, magnetic tiles and some activities to use with your children. See the "Sample-reading-lesson.pdf" for an example of a typical daily lesson.



## Help For Reading Difficulties *(continued)*

In order to provide more repetition, I have also purchased many, many word lists and stories from Orton-Gillingham Specialists on Teachers Pay Teachers. Some of my favorites are The Literacy Nest (Emily Gibbons) and The Dyslexia Classroom (Casey Harrison). I have these word lists, stories, and games printed out and put in sheet protectors so I can use and reuse them with multiple children.

If I can answer questions, please feel free to email me through [education@coracusa.com](mailto:education@coracusa.com).



# Help For Reading Difficulties *(continued)*

All About Reading, Level 1, Lesson 25: Sample pages

### Lesson 24 - Words with Final Blends

This lesson will teach words containing consonant blends at the end, as well as the Leap Word *wag*.

You will need:  Blast Off to Reading! pages 139-152  
 Word Cards 103-112

#### Before You Begin

A consonant blend is different from a consonant team. In a consonant blend, each letter retains its own sound. In consonant teams, such as *th*, *sh*, and *ch*, two letters combine to make a completely new sound.

#### Preview Consonant Blends

In this lesson, your student will learn to read words with consonant blends.

A consonant blend consists of two sounds that are said together quickly. For example, the word *lamp* has a consonant blend at the end. The /m/ and /p/ sounds are said in rapid succession, but each consonant keeps its own sound.

A blend at the end of a word is called a **final blend**. Final blends are easier to read than blends at the beginning of the word, so we will introduce final blends first. Read the following examples and listen for the blends.  
**dust help risk felt bump**

Words with consonant blends will be decoded using the same blending procedure that your student is already using. Touch each letter and say its sound, slowly at first, and then fast like you would in everyday speech.

Some phonics programs teach blends as a unit. For example, the blends *sp* and *nd* would be taught as their own sounds on letter tiles or flashcards. But that method requires much more memory work on the part of the student because the student would have to memorize dozens of blends. It is much simpler to have the student learn the basic phonograms and blend them to sound out words.

#### Automatic Word Recognition

*Automatic word recognition* means that words are recognized at a glance. If you have automatic word recognition, you don't have to decode the word; you just know what the word is with a single look. Another name for this skill is *automaticity*.

Lesson 24: Words with Final Blends 157

#### Before You Begin (continued)

Automaticity enables your student to read more fluently. When he doesn't have to laboriously decode each and every word, he can read smoothly and with more comprehension.

These fluency exercises give your student the practice he needs to develop automaticity. After encountering the same words multiple times, your student will move from sounding out the words to automatic word recognition.

#### Review

Review the Phonogram Cards that are behind the Review divider in your student's Reading Review Box. Show the card to your student and have him say the sound. If necessary, remind your student of the sound.

Review the Word Cards that are behind the Review divider in your student's Reading Review Box. If your student has difficulty reading the word, build the word with letter tiles and have your student sound it out using the procedure shown in Appendix C: Full Blending Procedure.

#### New Teaching

##### Blend Sounds with Letter Tiles

Build the word *land* with letter tiles. **l a n d**

"Sometimes there are two consonants at the end of a word, as in the word *land*. Listen and watch as I blend the letters in this word: l-a-n-d."

Touch the l and say /l/. **l a n d**

Touch the a and say /a/. **l a n d**

Touch the n and say /n/. **l a n d**

158 Lesson 24: Words with Final Blends

#### New Teaching (continued)

Touch the d and say /d/. **l a n d**

Now go back to the beginning of the word. Slide your finger under the letters l-a-n-d and say *land* slowly.

Finally, read the word *land* at a normal pace, as we do when we speak.

Using the same procedure for blending, have your student sound out the word *test*.

**t e s t**

#### Decode Words Containing Two-Letter Phonograms

Build the word *lunch* with letter tiles. **l u n ch**

"Sometimes one of the sounds at the end of a word is a consonant team, as in the word *lunch*. Listen and watch as I blend the letters in this word: l-u-n-ch."

Touch the l and say /l/. **l u n ch**

Touch the u and say /u/. **l u n ch**

Touch the n and say /n/. **l u n ch**

Lesson 24: Words with Final Blends 159

## Teachers' Book:



## Help For Reading Difficulties *(continued)*


All About Reading, Level 1, Lesson 25: Sample pages

Student Activity Book:

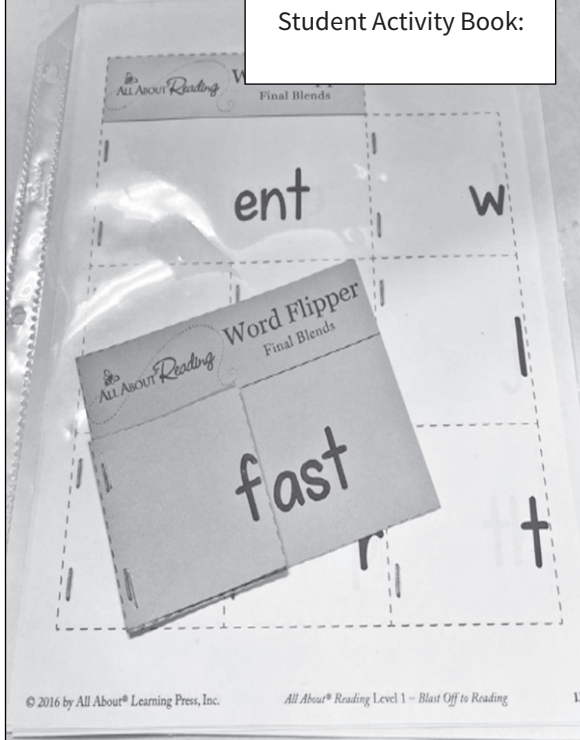
Lesson 24 - Practice Sheet

**New Words**

|                                   |                      |                       |                       |                       |                      |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| <b>-mp</b> chimp<br>jump<br>camp  | limp<br>lamp<br>lump | dump<br>pump<br>champ | damp<br>tamp<br>thump | bump<br>hump<br>chomp | ramp<br>Gump<br>romp |
| <b>-ct</b> fact                   | duct                 | act                   |                       |                       |                      |
| <b>-ld</b> weld                   | held                 | meld                  |                       |                       |                      |
| <b>-ft</b> theft<br>soft<br>shaft | gift<br>tuft<br>sift | loft<br>shift<br>left | raft<br>lift          |                       |                      |
| <b>-lk</b> elk                    | milk                 | silk                  | bulk                  |                       |                      |
| <b>-lp</b> help                   | gulp                 | yelp                  |                       |                       |                      |
| <b>-lt</b> quilt<br>wilt          | belt                 | silt                  | melt                  | tilt                  | felt                 |
| <b>-nd</b> fond<br>bend<br>band   | sand<br>and<br>fend  | wind<br>lend<br>mend  | hand<br>fund<br>tend  | pond<br>end<br>bond   | send<br>land         |



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Lesson 24 - Practice Sheet

**More New Words**

|      |      |      |      |     |      |       |
|------|------|------|------|-----|------|-------|
| was  | elf  | next | wept | elm | kept | shelf |
| film | text |      |      |     |      |       |

**Phrases**

|               |                |
|---------------|----------------|
| soft quilt    | munch on lunch |
| lend a hand   | fix the lamp   |
| mend the hem  | send help      |
| the last ant  | the bent tent  |
| gulp the milk | on the nest    |
| felt sad      | run fast       |
| at his desk   | jump in        |
| just a test   | a big hint     |

**Sentences**

The pond  
The pond had six fish.

Deb felt  
Deb felt the dust  
Deb felt the dust in the wind.

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Lesson 24 - Practice Sheet

**Sentences**

Bev and Beth  
Bev and Beth lost the quilt.

The red fox  
The red fox ran  
The red fox ran at dusk.

Ed had milk  
Ed had milk at lunch.

A gust of wind  
A gust of wind went past.

The gift shop  
The gift shop had a tan lamp.

The lost pup  
The lost pup was at risk.

That elk  
That elk was fast.

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## Help For Reading Difficulties *(continued)*

Reading two stories: "Tin Raft" and "Lost in the Bog" with Warm-Up sheets first. Stories are in beautiful hard bound books.

**New Teaching**

**Story 1: "Tin Raft"**

**Read the Warm-Up Sheet for "Tin Raft"**

Remove page 153 from the *Blast Off* activity book.

Have your student practice reading words and phrases that will be encountered in "Tin Raft."

Point out the name *Tish* in the Names section. "Tish is a nickname for Patricia."

**Teach Vocabulary and Activate Prior Knowledge**

Point out the illustration of a raft on the Warm-Up Sheet. "A *raft* is a flat structure that floats and is used as a boat. Rafts are often made of wood lashed together with cord."

Point out the illustration of a workbench on the Warm-Up Sheet. "This is a *workbench*. A workbench is a table where you can keep your tools and do small carpentry or electrical work, or repair small items."

"Have you ever had a favorite toy that was damaged or broken? What did you do to fix it?"

"The boy in this story has a damaged toy raft. Let's see if someone can fix it."

**Read "Tin Raft"**

"Turn to page 9 in your reader and read 'Tin Raft' aloud." Discuss your student's ideas for the questions below as you come to them.

**After page 14:** "Look at the raft in the illustration. Do you think it will be able to float now? Why or why not?"

**After reading:** "Why does Kent think this is the best gift?"

Lesson 25: Read "Tin Raft" and "Lost in the Bog"

Lesson 25 - Warm-Up Sheet for *Tin Raft*

**Words Taught in Previous Lessons**

|      |      |      |      |      |      |       |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|-------|
| was  | raft | bent | held | rust | dent | bench |
| best | sand | bend | mend | task | test | tilt  |
| gift |      |      |      |      |      |       |

**Phrases**

|              |               |
|--------------|---------------|
| tin raft     | big task      |
| had a dent   | test the raft |
| mend it      | did not tilt  |
| on the bench | best gift     |

**Names**

Kent  
Tish

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50%

**Using Finger-Tapping and Blending Strips**

While using Orton-Gillingham's multi-sensory approach to spelling, students learn to divide words by syllables. Each syllable contains 3 sounds (or blends). These tools can be used to aid students in recognizing those sounds and furthering their spelling development.

**RIGHT-HANDED**

This template is to be used with right-handed students. If a student writes with their right hand, they will finger tap with their left. It is important to blend words from left-to-right, so right-handed students will begin with their pinky while finger spelling.

**LEFT-HANDED**

This template is to be used with left-handed students. If a student writes with their left hand, they will finger tap with their right. It is important to blend words from left-to-right, so left-handed students will begin with their thumb while finger spelling.

For students who struggle with fine-motor skills or have trouble finger tapping, it may be easier to use the blending strip. This strip can be used with individual fingers (like finger-tapping) or with whole-hand taps.

### SPELLING

Using "Finger-Tapping" with fists for syllables and "Finger Spelling" with sounds in the each syllable is very useful in teaching children how to spell the words you are practicing.





# Homeschooling When the Stuff Hits the Fan

At a recent meeting of the CORAC Education team, someone brought up the following question: How would we homeschool our children if the grid went down or if we had some other "the end of the world as we know it" event? This is a question that I had never really thought about; but as I turned it over in my mind, I realized that we would be limited to whatever resources we had on hand at the time. But then I realized that our educational resources really wouldn't be that limited, because resourceful parents can make teaching materials out of just about anything (just as we can make a "teachable moment" out of pretty much any situation). As I thought about how I would educate my children in such circumstances, here are a dozen ideas that I came up with. Hopefully this list will help you think of other things that you could do.

- (1) The first thing that I would do is to stock up now on things that I might need for homeschooling for the next several years. Assuming that the supply chains hold long enough for there to be "back to school" sales later this summer, I will be buying a years-long supply of looseleaf notebook paper, folders and 3-ring binders, glue, crayons, markers, construction paper, pens, pencils and sharpeners, erasers, scotch and masking tape, art supplies, etc.
- (2) Along with buying school supplies, I will look on [abebooks.com](http://abebooks.com), [thriftbooks.com](http://thriftbooks.com) and other online sellers for any textbooks or other books that I'll need for several years of homeschooling. I have purchased used Spanish and math books for a few dollars apiece; some of these books are 40 or more years old, but they are well bound and should serve my children well.

As far as the items that I already have in my house and garage, here are some ideas on how I might use some of them:

- (3) A deck of playing cards: These can be used for making a simple memory-matching game for younger children, and a more complex matching game for older children. For children in the upper grades, they could be used as a mathematical tool for learning and illustrating the rules of probability.
- (4) (4) Needle, thread, fabric scraps, and old buttons: I could use these items for "Home Economics" and teach my kids how to sew a button, hem pants or a skirt, repair a rip in a jacket, patch a hole, and so on. I don't sew well enough to teach them to make new clothes, but at least I can help them to keep the ones they have in decent shape.

## Homeschooling When the Stuff Hits the Fan *(continued)*

- (5) Knitting and crochet needles, yarn, and patterns: Knitting and crocheting are other "Home Econ" skills that could be very useful in the coming years. These could also be considered Art classes.
- (6) An old ham-radio test-preparation book: When my 11-year-old son wanted to get a ham radio and take the exam for a Technician license (the entry-level ham-radio license), I worked the test preparation book into our homeschooling curriculum that year. My son learned mathematics that supplemented that in his regular math book, and science that enriched that in his regular science book. I would also take sentences from the test-preparation book and use them as English lessons: I would have my son parse the sentences (naming the nouns, verbs, adjectives, and such; pointing out the prepositional phrases and telling me whether they were adverbial or adjectival; diagramming the sentences; etc.). After this "unit study," my son had learned a great deal of academic material while positioning himself to earn a Technician license and be able to use a ham radio.
- (7) For more mathematics lessons, board games like Monopoly can teach even kindergartners how to add by fives, tens, and hundreds. I could use cookbooks to help teach fractions/scale up/scale down for recipes. I could use index cards for making flash cards for addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division facts. I could teach my high-school-aged son how to balance a checkbook and do a budget.
- (8) For Religion lessons, I could use the Bible (or a children's bible for little ones), the Baltimore Catechism for younger children or the Catechism of the Catholic Church for high schoolers, other religious books around the house, and saints' biographies written for the various children's reading levels.
- (9) For language arts: We have tons of fiction and nonfiction books around the house. Many of these could be used for reading lessons, book reports, essays, grammar lessons, vocabulary lessons, and thinking skills.
- (10) Maps and atlases could be used for geography, map-reading skills, and math skills.
- (11) I would look around my house to see which books could help my children learn history (of my state, of the US, of the Church, or of the world) and government. Biographies of the Founding Fathers, saints and other holy people, scientists, inventors, etc. can teach a great deal of history. Even historical fiction like Johnny Tremain (for younger kids) or books by Louis L'Amour (for older kids) can teach much history.



## Homeschooling When the Stuff Hits the Fan *(continued)*

- (12) Since I garden, I can work science, math, and home economics into our homeschooling plan: my children can help me plan and tend the garden; harvest the fruits and vegetables; and preserve the produce by canning, fermenting, dehydrating, and root cellaring.

This list of things that I could do (or in some cases, am already doing) is a good starting place, but it is only a start. If push came to shove, I'm confident that my husband and I could come up with many other ways to educate our children well by using only what we have on hand at a particular moment; and I'm certain that all the readers of this short article could do the same.





# Learning Styles

There are three systems that help us process information: visual, auditory, and kinesthetic. For the majority of us we can learn through any of these modes even though we have a preferred mode of learning. For some learners, though, there can be a strength in one area that is far greater than the other two areas. How do you know if your child has a preferred learning method? You do this by observation.

Visual learners learn by seeing it. Some even have a photographic memory. If you play memory games with your children, like showing them 10 items and then covering them up, they will be able to recall most of the items easily. They tend to be good readers and prefer to read information themselves instead of having someone read it out loud to them. These learners do well if they are shown how to do a math problem step by step. Taking notes is also helpful for them to review later. They may organize their material with color codes. When performing a writing assignment, they do better if they use a color coded organizer when making an outline.

For auditory learners, they learn by hearing it. Often auditory learners are very musical. They tend to read very slowly and do not remember what they read, but if material is read to them, they retain it quite well. When reading novels, they do best with audio books. The library and [librivox.org](http://librivox.org) are wonderful resources for this. For tests, read the instructions out loud to them before they begin.

For kinesthetic learners, they learn by doing it. Kinesthetic learners tend to have a lot of energy and want to move a lot. They can also excel in sports. These learners love the opportunity to explore at discovery museums. Kinesthetic learners benefit from hands-on learning. Bring them to the white board with you and have them work out steps in a math problem alongside you. Their memory will also be assisted if you write down notes on a white board and have them copy what you wrote.

We tend to teach or explain things using the learning mode that works best for us without even realizing it. If your learner seems to be tuned out or is getting frustrated, take a break from school by doing something your child enjoys (in school they call it recess), and then reteach the information in the child's learning style.





# CORAC Book Club: *Lord of the World*

## Why this book?

*Lord of the World*, by Monsignor Robert Hugh Benson, was intended as a parable, but since its publication in 1906 has proved rather prescient regarding the movement of humanity away from God, and the ways this movement affects society and individuals. This book is an opportunity to become better prepared for whatever lies ahead in the storm. It will help us build mental agility through considering possible situations, decisions, and actions. It can help us develop spiritual "toughness" and courage, virtues which aid us in taking the next right step.

## Lord of the World

In this profound and prescient novel, Monsignor Robert Hugh Benson gives us an imaginative foretelling of the end of the world. All stories, Aristotle said, have a beginning, a middle, and an end, but most ends are relative, the terminus of this chain of acts or that. But what of the end that terminates all human action as we know it, the end of time itself, the Second Coming? Since this novel appeared in 1906, many others have been devoted to nuclear disaster, destructive comets, and other hair-raising possibilities. What sets Benson's story apart and makes it as readable today as when it was written is the Catholic and biblical context that provides the ultimate meaning.

Robert Hugh Benson (1871–1914) was the son of the Archbishop of Canterbury, whose conversion to Catholicism caused a stir. He became a great apologist for the faith, in spiritual works as well as in works of the imagination. *Lord of the World* is first of all a tremendous "read," but it is also spiritual food for thought.

"Mr. Benson sees the world, four or five generations hence [this review was written in 1906], free at last from all minor quarrels, and ranged against itself in two camps, Humanitarianism for those who believe in no divinity but that of man, Catholicism for those who believe in no divinity but that of God."  
– *London Times*

"Interesting it must be to all to whom the deepest convictions of a man's heart are of moment. And in the artistic balance and taste of Father Benson's literary power every reader will find delight."  
– *New York Times*

"The book as art is beautiful, delicately balanced, deeply inspired, intelligently executed."  
– *Putnam's*

## **CORAC Book Club: Lord of the World** *(continued)*

The above description is quoted from:

**<https://www.staugustine.net/our-books/books/lord-of-the-world/>**

You can purchase the paperback at this link, or search online for other options.

You can also listen or read for free.

Audiobook:

**<https://librivox.org/lord-of-the-world-by-robert-hugh-benson/>**

Duration: 10 hrs 35 min

Ebook:

**<https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/14021>**

Lord of the World is mentioned in this article:

<https://www.crisismagazine.com/opinion/the-return-of-the-antichrist>

- There are 3 main sections in this book, so let's start by reading BOOK I.
- Engage in the continuing conversation by commenting on this post and/or in the CORAC Book Club group on Signal.
- With enough interest, we'll schedule a live Zoom discussion as well.
- Email [education@corac.co](mailto:education@corac.co) to be added to the email list for book club announcements.





# Teaching the True Science of Weather

It is more crucial than ever for parents to take control of educating their children and preparing them for challenging the world view of many of their peers. Too often, facts are dismissed in favor of emotion. It is hard enough being a kid, let alone being one that is facing the insanity of the world today. Kids are often told one thing at home, but another thing entirely by society. It is easy for them to become confused and question their beliefs.

Parents need all the help they can get. You are taking on a relentless battle that will challenge your patience and resolve every day!

The good news is that you are making a difference when you take the time to talk to your kids and teach them at home.

Over the years, in my capacity as an on-air meteorologist, I had countless opportunities to speak to students and teach them about weather and science. In those settings, I could always tell which kids had parents who taught them respect, discipline, and discernment. Those kids were invariably the ones who were able to grasp the more complex concepts I was speaking to them about. Those kids had a distinct advantage over the other students. And, it usually wasn't even a close call.

I see that even more distinctly today. Science, and the scientific method have been replaced with social-emotional learning. The laws of physics are being dismissed by those who want to use their own set of "facts". The problem with that sort of narcissistic view of science is that God created this place where we all live, and He is the one who determines the truth! Refuting that truth is futile.

Your daily conversations with your kids make a huge difference. Even if it may not feel that way at times. So be encouraged by the simple fact that you are making the effort to be involved in their lives and their education. It will pay off!! Have faith!

I decided to do my part by providing an educational platform called IQ Weather. I have worked in the field of meteorology for over 40 years, and wanted to share what I learned over those many decades with families.

My career in meteorology began working aboard an aircraft carrier providing weather data and forecasts for flight operations. I then went on to work at five different television stations across the country...the last 36 years of which were as a Chief Meteorologist.

When you work in a particular field of science that is tough and challenging, you realize the importance of being objective and using your knowledge to make important decisions. I had to do that on a daily basis making forecasts, warning of severe weather, and helping people plan their lives around the weather.

## Teaching the True Science of Weather *(continued)*

In addition to my on-air work, I created a giant annual outdoor weather show for the Kansas City Royals baseball team, called School Day at the K. For 20 years I wrote and produced that program to use that venue to spark students' interest in science. Science can be a daunting subject for some students, but I wanted to show them that they were capable of understanding and using science in their lives and perhaps even as a career.

We set out to create a course that teaches kids about how our amazing planet really works. Our weather and climate are determined by forces so powerful and enormous that it is truly hard to imagine. Oceans, volcanoes, space dust, solar cycles, other planets in our solar system, and even our location in the galaxy all play a role in what we experience here on Earth each day. God created an amazingly complex and resilient place for us to call home.

There is so much to know and understand. Your entire family will benefit by looking at the science of weather in a different way. Understanding the various interactions that take place each day which lead to changes in weather patterns, or in long term climate patterns will help your kids realize that simplistic tweets or "sound bite" science is not true science. Our course is designed to give them a strong base of knowledge that will help them filter out deceptive and misleading information they might be exposed to every day from many sources. If you understand how science really works, it is much harder to be fooled!

In addition to our video lessons, we also provide quizzes, points to discuss, lesson resources, teaching guides, experiments, and links to extra study resources for a deeper dive on many topics. Our goal was to make a course that offers something for every member of the family, and to make the lessons fun and interesting! We hope you have as much fun taking the course as we've had creating and designing it!

Learn more at: <https://iqweather.com/>





# The Problem and Core Objective

## For Children and Youth

The true purpose of education has been pushed aside from mainstream educational practice for so long that it has been generally forgotten in that arena. It is almost automatic to lose sight of the real purpose of education in the day-to-day struggle to attain it. In order to properly frame the goals and tasks of the Education team regarding education of children and youth, one must take a step back and look at the big picture.

### What is the goal of education?

Is it just knowing how to read and write? Getting a good job or preparing for a successful career? Assimilation and transmission of ever-changing cultural values? Is the goal completely utilitarian, as most present-day educators assume (see here: <https://www.nc3t.com/what-is-the-real-purpose-of-education/>), or is there another important dimension missing here?

Martin Luther King, Jr. once wrote on this topic and his analysis seems rather prescient. King argues against the view of education as purely utilitarian. "The function of education...is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically. But education which stops with efficiency may prove the greatest menace to society. The most dangerous criminal may be the man gifted with reason, but with no morals." King concludes with a warning: "We must remember that intelligence is not enough. Intelligence plus character— that is the goal of true education. ... If we are not careful, our colleges will produce a group of close-minded, unscientific, illogical propagandists, consumed with immoral acts. Be careful, "brethren!" Be careful, teachers!" (<https://kinginstitute.stanford.edu/king-papers/documents/purpose-education>)

Here is another example of what is currently being taught about the goal of education. From the following actual lesson plan on the sociology of education, the "acquisition of knowledge and development of the personality of an individual is no longer presumed to be the main function of education." education. ([https://www.academia.edu/8973126/SOCIOLOGY\\_OF\\_EDUCATION](https://www.academia.edu/8973126/SOCIOLOGY_OF_EDUCATION))

This deeply mistaken philosophy has devastating consequences to the very people the system purports to educate. Here are just a few results of our current career-based educational system which has also become steeped in our culture's poisonous ideologies:

- "Conveyor-belt" process that treats students as products rather than as individual persons.
- Activist kids who don't know that they are being used as clueless pawns of mass media. Woke anti-God ideologies being passed off as ultimate cultural values.

## The Problem and Objective For Children and Youth *(continued)*

- Loss of the sense of well-being and happiness among young people.
- In general, an ever-declining basic level of knowledge and skill among highschool graduates.

So, again, what is the goal of education?

The primary purpose of education is to bring the individual closer to God, through contemplation of God and all that is good, true, and beautiful; to "know, love and serve God in this life, so that we can be happy with him forever in heaven." (<https://members.classicalconversations.com/article/purpose-education>) Parents as the "primary educators" of their children must learn how to educate their children to form not fragmented experts or cog-like workers with stunted minds and hearts, but whole, wise and virtuous persons (<https://classicallyhomeschooling.com/purpose-of-a-classicaleducation/>).

Secondarily, a good education provides the student with the knowledge and skills needed for their eventual vocation in life and to be an upstanding member of society.

### **Homeschooling: the preferred option for a wholesome education?**

The underlying assertions of the Education team:

- True education leads the student towards God.
- A complete education includes life skills.
- Each individual's development and personality, as well as their God-given vocation, must be respected and accounted for in his or her education--there is no "one-size-fits-all" method or curriculum.

These assertions or goals simply cannot currently be achieved at nearly all public or private schools, and even many parochial schools. The educational system, following the whims of the culture, has failed our children, and worse, has harmed them in myriad ways. Incredible numbers of recent news stories detail these abysmal failures. In the few schools that still provide a truly good education, parents must still make sure that the school's educational methods and environment are a good fit for their child's learning style and development, and be vigilant to ensure that the cultural rot of genderism, wokeism, etc. are not seeping into the school in other ways, i.e. through "socialization."

In most cases, homeschooling is now the only option to provide a proper, wholesome education for children and youth through high school. The task of the Education team, by "forming a nationwide network of experienced homeschoolers," is to provide information, guidance, and resources



## The Problem and Objective For Children and Youth *(continued)*

(new and existing) to assist parents to begin or successfully continue homeschooling their children of any age through high school. We'll connect new homeschooling parents to trusted local homeschooling groups, and recommend options for different types of homeschooling, including completely offline education.

As discussed previously, the most important aspect of a person's education is their spiritual and moral formation. Without this, children grow up to be what C. S. Lewis calls "men without chests," not fully human but mere hollow shells. They may perhaps have the form of humans but they lack the most important things, the very things that set us apart from the irrational animals: a well-formed mind, heart, and spirit. The goal of the education team is to provide resources and direction to help children grow into the whole, virtuous, thoughtful, healthy and happy people that God made them to be.

### **Faith formation is the primary duty of parents as educators**

With that in mind, the first task of the homeschooling parent is to find trustworthy, effective resources to properly form children in their faith. Here are a few worthy resources to consider:

Based on the tried-and-true Baltimore Catechism, Voice of the Family has produced a wonderful program: "Drawing on the message of Our Blessed Mother and following the example of the three children at Fatima, Our Lady of the Rosary Family Catechism has been created for the whole family to deepen their knowledge and love of our Catholic Faith. All children, younger and older, as well as adults, are invited to participate in the course. This is truly a crusade of learning thoroughly the essentials of the Catholic Faith and is available for free." (<https://olrfamilycatechism.com/>) We love this course, and the whole family is learning (or reviewing, as the case may be) the basic truths of the faith.

Another excellent program is available through the Theology of the Body Evangelization Team (<https://tobet.org/>), based on Pope St. John Paul II's Theology of the Body. "This profound teaching offered ... an examination of what it means to be human, made in God's image and likeness, and how that reality is made visible in our human bodies." It teaches children the truth about the body--not about sexuality, but the body as a whole and a gift from God. The program includes "an original, age-appropriate program for Pre-School to 8th grade children not only to protect them from these negative influences [of the culture], but also to help them to see the wonder of being made in God's image and likeness." The home instruction sets available in the online store (<https://tobet.org/shop/>) include include the lesson books and the parents guides.

